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SUBJECT: IRAQI ELECTIONS OCV: LARGE VOTER TURNOUT ON DAY
THREE IN JORDAN

Ref: A) AMMAN 9668 B) AMMAN 9630 C) AMMAN 9513

INCREASED VOTER TURNOUT

1. (SBU) Voter turnout increased noticeably on December 15, the third and last day of Iraqi election Out-of-Country Voting (OCV) in Jordan. Amman-based Independent Election Commission of Iraq (IECI) OCV chief Hamdia al-Husseini told Emboff at 4:30PM that voter turnout is running at almost double that experienced on day two (reported Ref B), which saw more than 13,000 votes cast. Hussein predicted that voter turnout in Jordan on day three will exceed 20,000.

2. (SBU) Embassy Amman election observer teams visited 11 of the 13 OCV polling sites in Jordan December 15, and noted substantial voter turnout. At one site, all ten voting stations were in use by voters by mid-afternoon. As on previous days, Embassy observers found polling operations proceeding smoothly and professionally in a business-like atmosphere. Observers noted that some voters brought young children with them to witness the event.

3. (SBU) IECI's Hussein expressed annoyance at repeated attempts at double-voting by some voters (Ref A); she expressed confidence, however, that most of these attempts had failed. Several Embassy observers noted that IECI staff carefully checked voter fingers for vestiges of indelible ink before admitting them to the voting area, and showed zeal in ensuring that each voter's finger was well-dipped in ink before ballots were cast. Embassy teams also noted the presence at polling stations of observers from the International Mission for Iraqi Elections (IMIE), and several Iraqi political parties as well.

OCV-Jordan Vote Counting

4. (SBU) Iraq OCV voting in Jordan is scheduled to conclude tonight (December 15) at 8:00PM, although Hussein assured us that any voters still in line at that time will be allowed to vote. OCV vote-counting in Jordan will commence at each individual voting site on Friday, December 16 at 8:00AM. Embassy observers will visit several of the polling sites on Friday to view the vote counting process.

Hale